

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAM-01 SAB-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 /077 W

----- 012515

R 020738Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0509

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0640

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, QA, IR

SUBJ: IRANIAN AMBASSADOR COMMENTS ON QATARI-IRANIAN RELATIONS
AND GULF SECURITY

1. IRANIAN AMBASSADOR TO QATAR, SHA AL DIN SHAFI, CALLED ON JUNE 1 TO COMPARE NOTES PRIOR TO HIS RETURN TO TEHRAN FOR CONSULTATIONS. SHAFI EXPRESSED ANNOYANCE OVER JOINT COMMUNIQUE MENTIONING "ARABIAN" GULF ISSUED AFTER RECENT VISIT OF KUWAITI FOREIGN MINISTER. HE NOTED THAT SUCH REFERENCES WERE EXTREMELY IRRITATING TO THE SHAH HIMSELF, AND THAT HE HAD PASSED HIS PIQUE ALONG TO APPROPRIATE GOQ OFFICIALS WHO HAD ASSURED HIM THAT MENTION OF "ARABIAN" GULF WAS SLIP UP, AND HAD EXPRESSED REGRET. SHAFI REMARKED THAT HE WAS MOST SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE SINCERITY OF THESE ASSURANCES, ALTHOUGH HE CONSTANTLY TOLD AT HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOQ OF DESIRE FOR EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH IRACOM

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2. I COMMENTED THAT I THOUGHT IT WAS COMPLETELY UNREALISTIC

FOR SHAFI TO EXPECT TWOZARAB GULF STATES TO RESPECT SHAH'S SENSITIVIL ES ON NAME OF GULF. KUWAIT AND QATAR HAD MERELY ARTICULATED ARAB SENSITIVITIES ON SUBJECT. I AGREED THAT GOQ REGRETS CERTAINLY INSINCERE. I EXPRESSED HOPE THAT ALL CONCERNED WOULD BE SENSIBLE ABOUT CONTROVERSY OVER NAME OF GULF AND NOTED SECENT REGIONAL FISHING CONFERENCE HAD FINESSED ISSUE SO THAT IT COULD PROCEED WITH ITS WORK (DOHA 0492).

3. I ASKED SHAFI HOW HE READ THE FREQUENT TOINGS AND FROINGS GOING ON AMONG GULF LEADERS. HE REPLIED THAT IT APPEARED

THAT THE SMALL LOWER GULF STATES WERE APPREHENSIVE THAT IRAN, IRAQ AND SAUDI ARABIA WOULD COALESCE TO IMPOSE THEIR WILL IN THE REGION THROUGH A REGIONAL SECURITY PACT OR SOME OTHER DEVICE WHETHER THE SMALL GULF STATES LIKED IT OR NOT. ALTHOUGH HE POOH POOHED THEIR FEARS, HE EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR APPREHENSIONS AND IMPLIED THEY MAY HAVE GOOD REASON FOR THEM. WE AGREED THAT GOQ ATTITUDE TOWARD ANY REGIONAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS IN GULF WAS BEARISH TO SAY THE LEAST, SINCE QATARIS SAW THEIR PRINCIPAL PATRON, SAUDI ARABIA, AS THE WEAKEST OF THE GULF'S BIG POWERS.

4. I REMARKED TO SHAFI THAT PRESS REPORTS ON ALLEGED SECURITY DISCUSSIONS AMONG GULF STATES FREQUENTLY ALLUDED TO DESIRE THAT GULF BE FREE OF "GREAT POWER" PRESENCE. I SAID I ASSUMED THESE WERE REFERENCES TO SOVIET PRESENCE IN UM QASR AND US PRESENCE IN BAHRAIN. I SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THIS MIGHT MAKE GOOD RHETORIC, REOPENING OF SUEZ CANAL COULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN REGION, AND IT APPEARED TO ME THAT IT WOULD BEHOOVE GULF STATES TO BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL LEST THEY UPSET BALANCE OF FORCES IN AREA TO THEIR OWN DISADVANTAGE. SHAFI DID NOT RPT NOT COMMENT.
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